

State of California  
The Resources Agency  
**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**  
Wildlife Programs Branch

**2003 Annual Bear Take Report**

Summary:

The 2003 black bear hunting season closed according to the regulations on December 28, 2003. A regulation change in 2001 increased the tag quota from 1,500 to 1,700 bears harvested making it the second time in seven years that the season has run to its designated closure date rather than closing when the Department has received its tag quota. The License and Revenue Branch has reported that a total of 22,331 bear tags were sold in 2003 with 22,083 resident and 248 non-resident tags. Non-resident tag sales decreased just slightly from 2002. A total of 1,650 black bears were reported taken this year and overall hunter success was 7.4%, down from 2002.

Once again, success rates for the different hunting methods varied only marginally in 2003 compared to previous years (see Table 3). Hunters with trailing hounds took 813 bears, (49.3%), which is down from 2002 but still representing about half the kills. Hunters took 522 bears (31.6%) while they were deer hunting, a slight decrease from last year. Archery hunters accounted for only 76 kills, down about one percent from last year, while the number of hunters using guides increased from 4.6% to 6.2% (103 kills).

Ninety one percent of successful hunters, and 2.7% of unsuccessful bear hunters indicated the number of days they spent hunting on their report cards. Successful hunters spent an average of 4.5 days, and unsuccessful hunters an average of 7.5 days hunting bear, just slightly different than in 2002. A total of 227 (13.8%) successful bear hunters said they had taken bears on private land. This is down almost 8% from 2002, which means more bears are being taken on public lands. Preliminary numbers, as of March, 2004 show that premolar teeth were collected from 1,066 (64.6%) of the bears harvested.

Again in 2003 the general bear season and deer season overlapped in the A, B, C, D, and some of the X zones (see Table 4). Zones X-1 through X-7b opened on October 11<sup>th</sup>. During the general deer season hunters were limited to one dog per hunter. Regulation changes in 2002 continue to be the primary factor affecting tag sales, season closure, and changes in the proportions of bear take by hunting method.

Seasons:

Archery Bear Season: Opened August 16 through September 7, 2003.

General Bear Season: Opened (Table 4), closes December 28, 2003.

Table 1: 2003 Black Bear Take by					
Department of Fish and Game Region and County					
Region 1	County	Males	Females	Unknown	Total
	Del Norte	13	8	0	21
	Humboldt	60	52	0	112
	Lassen	15	10	1	26
	Modoc	2	1	0	3
	Shasta	84	58	0	142
	Siskiyou	129	59	1	189
	Tehama	38	29	0	67
	Trinity	119	82	0	201
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>761</b>
	<b>% of Take</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>
Region 2	Alpine	7	1	0	8
	Amador	1	0	0	1
	Butte	33	12	0	45
	Calaveras	10	9	0	19
	Colusa	1	0	0	1
	El Dorado	42	19	0	61
	Glenn	18	9	0	27
	Nevada	9	6	0	15
	Placer	24	14	0	38
	Plumas	33	28	0	61
	Sierra	12	3	1	16
	Yolo	1	0	0	1
	Yuba	7	5	0	12
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>305</b>
	<b>% of Take</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>.06%</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
Region 3	Lake	2	3	0	5
	Mendocino	44	30	0	74
	San Luis Obispo	0	0	0	0
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>79</b>
	<b>% of Take</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>
Region 4	Fresno	46	39	0	85
	Kern	38	27	0	65
	Madera	22	18	0	40
	Mariposa	11	13	0	24
	Stanislaus	1	2	0	3
	Tulare	111	41	0	152
	Tuolumne	43	20	0	63
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>432</b>
	<b>% of Take</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>26.2%</b>
Region 5	Los Angeles	5	4	0	9
	Santa Barbara	5	3	0	8
	Ventura	7	7	0	14
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>
	<b>% of Take</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>
Region 6	Inyo	2	0	0	2
	Mono	1	1	0	2
	Riverside	0	3	0	3
	San Bernardino	23	7	0	30
	Unknown	3	2	0	5
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>
	<b>% of Take</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>Statewide Totals</b>		<b>1,022</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1,650</b>
<b>Statewide Percent of Take</b>		<b>61.9%</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2**  
**Ten Year Bear Take Data**  
**For Returned Bear Tags**

<b>Ten-Year Bear Take Data</b>										
<b>County</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1997<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1998<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1999<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2000<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2001<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Alpine	3	7	14	10	10	26	19	5	5	8
Amador	0	2	4	2	1	3	0	0	0	1
Butte	57	55	32	63	28	48	38	39	51	45
Calaveras	9	11	25	26	13	12	19	17	19	19
Colusa	1	0	1	5	6	2	0	2	2	1
Del Norte	32	34	44	35	51	53	32	18	28	21
El Dorado	27	47	23	44	44	29	61	61	61	61
Fresno	65	49	75	85	62	70	94	78	78	85
Glenn	21	8	23	11	22	27	33	18	25	27
Humboldt	127	82	102	119	142	164	130	110	147	112
Inyo	5	4	4	2	1	3	5	2	5	2
Kern	25	25	40	32	34	32	79	85	76	65
Lake	3	5	16	16	16	7	8	27	11	5
Lassen	20	18	11	7	22	30	19	13	8	26
Los Angeles	7	12	9	5	6	13	13	16	2	9
Madera	34	38	48	67	50	41	41	46	53	40
Mariposa	9	26	33	22	15	30	20	35	27	24
Mendocino	100	73	94	86	102	91	93	122	78	74
Merced	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Modoc	3	0	5	0	0	6	6	3	4	3
Mono	5	5	6	7	6	4	10	10	9	2
Napa	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	4
Nevada	16	22	7	12	9	15	20	17	14	15
Placer	31	32	26	50	36	32	38	37	34	38
Plumas	85	93	77	98	96	71	49	82	75	61
Riverside	2	2	3	6	2	2	4	2	5	3
San Bernardino	21	24	19	18	17	17	14	23	25	30
San Joaquin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Santa Barbara	6	8	19	23	20	18	14	16	12	8
Shasta	226	183	219	148	185	208	179	104	178	142
Sierra	34	21	16	32	12	33	31	34	28	16
Siskiyou	173	171	196	156	205	260	181	104	199	189
Sonoma	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Stanislaus	2	1	0	2	5	4	6	1	2	3
Tehama	87	52	71	76	75	86	65	79	81	67
Trinity	193	169	261	184	186	242	190	198	179	201
Tulare	105	83	84	107	103	75	133	130	138	152
Tuolumne	33	63	68	84	60	46	103	66	60	63
Ventura	5	13	29	22	24	20	27	21	26	14
Yolo	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
Yuba	15	8	2	14	6	13	17	8	17	12
Unknown	19	36	4	0	3	2	3	3	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>1,714</b>	<b>1,677</b>	<b>1,676</b>	<b>1,836</b>	<b>1,796</b>	<b>1,633</b>	<b>1,768</b>	<b>1,650</b>
<b>Bear Tags Sold</b>	<b>12,123</b>	<b>12,169</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>15,264</b>	<b>18,475</b>	<b>18,321</b>	<b>20,620</b>	<b>19,796</b>	<b>22,157</b>	<b>22,331</b>

**Table 3**  
**Method of Take Summary**  
**For Returned Bear Tags, Statewide -2003**

County	Used Dogs	Used Archery Equipment	While Deer Hunting	Used Guides	Hunt In County (Res)	Total Harvested
Alpine	1	1	2	0	0	8
Amador	0	0	1	0	0	1
Butte	34	0	4	0	20	45
Calaveras	8	0	9	0	3	19
Colusa	0	0	0	0	0	1
Del Norte	7	1	6	0	20	21
El Dorado	35	4	20	0	19	61
Fresno	20	5	39	0	58	85
Glenn	2	0	16	0	6	27
Humboldt	70	1	28	6	70	112
Inyo	0	0	1	0	1	2
Kern	22	5	27	1	37	65
Lake	0	0	4	0	1	5
Lassen	22	0	1	1	10	26
Los Angeles	1	1	4	0	6	9
Madera	19	2	18	0	6	40
Mariposa	14	0	6	0	8	24
Mendocino	14	5	35	5	17	74
Merced	0	0	0	0	0	0
Modoc	3	0	0	0	0	3
Mono	0	0	2	0	0	2
Napa	1	0	3	0	1	4
Nevada	2	0	8	0	4	15
Placer	14	0	13	0	12	38
Plumas	41	4	13	4	6	61
Riverside	0	0	2	0	2	3
San Bernardino	15	4	5	1	17	30
San Luis Obispo	0	0	0	0	0	0
Santa Barbara	1	0	5	0	4	8
Shasta	75	3	29	20	71	142
Sierra	8	0	8	0	0	16
Siskiyou	137	13	40	17	58	189
Sonoma	0	0	0	0	0	1
Stanislaus	0	0	1	0	0	3
Tehama	35	5	22	5	18	67
Trinity	113	7	59	15	42	201
Tulare	56	11	62	27	49	152
Tuolumne	35	3	22	0	7	63
Ventura	0	0	6	1	4	14
Yolo	1	0	0	0	0	1
Yuba	7	1	1	0	4	12
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>1,650</b>
<b>% of Harvest</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>35.2%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4**  
**Opening Date and Season Length of Bear Season by Deer Hunting Zone**  
**2003 Hunting Season**

Deer Zone	Opening Date	Closing Date	Season Length
A	August 9	December 28	142
B1, B2, B3, B5	September 20	December 28	100
B4	August 23	December 28	128
B6	September 20	December 28	100
C1, C2, C3 C4	September 20	December 28	100
D3, D4, D5, D8, D9, D10	September 27	December 28	93
D6, D7	September 20	December 28	100
D11, D13, D14, D15, D17	October 11	December 28	79
D12	November 1	December 28	58
D16	October 25	December 28	65
D19	October 4	December 28	85
X1-7b	October 11	December 28	79
X8, X10	September 27	December 28	93
X9a, X9b, X12	September 20	December 28	100
X9c	October 18	December 28	72